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Official Organ of the Special Libraries Association

# Special Libraries

*"Putting Knowledge to Work"*



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*Indexed in Industrial Arts Index and Public Affairs Information Service*

**FEBRUARY 1936**

VOLUME 27

NUMBER 2

# SPECIAL LIBRARIES

MARIAN C. MANLEY, *Editor*

Vol. 27, No. 2

February, 1936

## Statistical Reference Work

*By Linda H. Morley*

LIBRARIAN, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COUNSELORS

### Part I. Specifications Affecting Statistical Data

**S**PECIAL librarians in almost all types of organizations are asked for statistics both in their own fields and in others. The search for quantitative data is generally pleasurable because the request can be specific; but it is also often elusive because there is such variety of form and manner of presentation of statistical information. It is obvious, however, that in order to be useful in a given situation statistics must conform to one, and usually several, definite specifications.

Although special librarians are familiar with the varying forms of statistical presentation and the different types of quantitative data, it may be of interest to assemble the fundamental factors in regard to the form and use of statistics, from the point of view of the librarian, and in particular from the angle of the searcher for statistics, in order that a groundwork may be laid for a reasoned approach to the problem of finding statistical facts and with the hope that more search procedures in different subject fields may be formulated.

#### Variations in Statistical Presentation Important Factors in Reference Work

In meeting requests for statistical information and in cataloging sources of statistics needed by his organization, the business librarian keeps certain points

in mind. For instance, the same statistics may be published in several places, that is, figures compiled by one organization may be reprinted in one or more journals or books. In some cases, the complete table is reprinted but more often only sections of it are shown. Government statistics are constantly quoted in this way. In searching for certain figures, the fact that quoted statistics may be a selection only, suggests that the original sources may give figures in the form desired although the quoted tables do not. For this reason as well as for purposes of accuracy it is preferable to use the original source.

Because statistics required for business purposes generally have to conform to such definite specifications the librarian will save himself both time and chagrin if he knows the principal possible forms and varieties of statistics so that he can secure from the inquirer at the outset the exact specifications to which such statistics must conform to be useful in each particular case. It is disconcerting to the librarian and detrimental to the library's prestige to find some figures after several hours' search, let us say, and on giving them to the inquirer to be met with the statement, "Oh, but these figures are by months and I need them by weeks," or "We need the figures in dollars, not in tons." Such things should, and can, be avoided if the business

librarian knows the principal forms and variations in which statistical data may appear, thinks through far enough when the request is made, or goes back to the inquirer, to get all the limitations and specifications that the conditions demand, and any possible alternatives. For no other type of request is it so necessary to get limits set in advance of search, by obtaining answers to the questions in the well known formula — "What? When? Where? and Why?"

At least an elementary knowledge of statistical method is almost essential in many special libraries. Business librarians find it greatly to their advantage to secure such knowledge either by reading or by taking a formal course in the subject if they have not previously done so. Some of the more important factors of which the librarian needs to be aware are outlined in succeeding paragraphs.

### Form of Presentation

Statistical data appear in several forms: Actual figures; Charts or graphs; Index numbers. To what extent data in these three forms may be used interchangeably depends upon the purposes for which they are needed and on the person who requires them. For instance, if a person wants to know the total production of lead in the United States by months for a given year, a chart which shows this information with exactness will be as serviceable as the actual figures. The scale of many charts is too small to obtain exact figures, however. Should index numbers to show trend in price of automobile tires be wanted, actual figures will scarcely serve because there are many sizes and kinds of tires, and figures for one kind would not be so indicative; yet if the information is wanted by a statistician, or there is a statistical department in the organization, and it is worth the work, an index number can be constructed if sufficient

numerical data can be supplied. Figures can likewise be translated into charts if the services of a draftsman are available.

### Date and Period

Figures are compiled for standard periods, as weeks, months, years, etc., but they may represent either totals or averages for such periods. It is obvious that weekly and monthly statistics ordinarily may not be used interchangeably, since they cannot be converted from one to the other accurately (at least not until the 13-month year comes into use!). On the other hand, weekly and yearly, or monthly and yearly, data may be used together readily by conversion from one to the other, if yearly figures are to be used.

Other figures represent conditions as of a specific date and, of course, are not comparable with either totals or averages for definite periods. Such statistics as stock on hand of different commodities, or deposits in different classes of banks, are generally given as of December 31, whereas rates of exchange on the franc, let us say, may be for a specific date or an average for any specified period. Accident data may be for the total number in given periods, or an average for such periods, or may be in the form of frequency or severity rates.

### Units of Measure

Units of measure in great variety are employed, but most of them fall into one of the following classes:

Units of *time*, as days, hours, etc.

Units of *value*, as dollars, pounds sterling, etc.

Units of *quantity*, as tons, gallons, watts, etc.

In meeting requests, the desired unit of measure should be ascertained, but it should be realized that conversion from one unit to another is sometimes possible

by simple, sometimes only by difficult, calculation; but in other cases conversion is not possible at all. Therefore, if data in the desired units are not found, others should be considered with this point in mind.

If statistical questions are often received, it may be advantageous to indicate the unit of measure as part of the catalog entry.

### Classification

Tables and charts are generally broken down into divisions. The basis of such breakdown varies according to the application, but some of the most frequently used types of subdivisions are:

Geographic, i.e., by country, state, etc.

Industries as metal industry, automobile industry, etc.

Occupations as carpenter, clerk, etc.

Sex

Age

Size

If in calculating statistical data the basis of subdivision decision is indicated briefly, it is possible to select the appropriate source directly from the catalog entry.

### Comparative Data

The type and extent of comparative data given vary greatly in different publications. In some current sources, figures for the one or two similar periods immediately preceding are sometimes given to indicate whether the present trend is up or down. In other cases, especially where the particular figures fluctuate according to the time of year, the comparative data given are for the same period in the preceding year. Incidentally, this printing of comparative data in current publications provides a basis for discarding parts of files that are kept only, or primarily, for the statistics they contain. For instance, when

periodicals print figures for two consecutive months or weeks in each issue, alternate issues may be discarded; or when figures for the same periods in the previous year are printed in each issue, alternate years may be disposed of, and so forth.

In cataloging, distinction should be made between current sources which generally give but slight comparative data, frequently one other figure only, or sometimes none, and compilations covering more or less extended periods, since requests may be for the latest figures available or for data covering a number of years.

It is frequently true that for statistics prepared by government bodies, compilations are issued for varying periods, often annually or sometimes at longer or irregular periods. This makes for ease of use and often allows current publications to be discarded. Such compilations do not always give as complete data as the current publication, therefore the satisfactoriness of such compilations for the particular library must be considered.

### Frequency and Lag

In most business organizations certain statistics are wanted at the earliest moment they are available. Therefore, the librarian must study the sources of such current data and find out which publication issues them most frequently and with the least delay. For example, a monthly index number indicating trend in production for some commodity of interest to the organization may be compiled. This may appear regularly in several journals; in one, a weekly, where the January index number does not appear until the second weekly issue for February, and in another monthly journal which is published on the seventh of each month. The lag is therefore less in the monthly journal than in the weekly. In the case of government

figures, a press release issued by the compiling bureau may appreciably reduce the lag.

If statistical material is fully cataloged, the method of indicating the "frequency of issue" must be distinguished from the note of "period covered." For example, figures representing a weekly average may be published in a monthly journal,

or vice versa. The word "monthly" or "weekly" on the catalog card is not sufficient to cover these two points.

If much statistical reference or research work is carried on, it may be desirable to indicate the lag and frequency or date of issue on all cards for statistics appearing at regular intervals in current publications.

## Books of 1935 That Have Proved Useful to Us

*By Marguerite Burnett*

LIBRARIAN, FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF NEW YORK

A BOOK columnist recently spoke of his "1935 Discovery List," reserved for the few choice titles that had titillated his jaded appetite. I immediately wondered which of our library's acquisitions I would advance to such a lofty position. But a search-light turned back through the months reveals such an array of titles crowding and pushing for equal recognition that, bewildered, I had to promise an audition to as many as I could crowd on the narrow stage, and abandon the attempt to make stars of a few. So if no one book seemed sufficiently outstanding to be listed as a thrilling discovery, nevertheless, the range of ideas is in itself stimulating.

The criterion for our choice in this particular bank library is, strictly, "usefulness," and if some interesting and important titles are among the missing, I refer you for a real comprehensive statement on the subject to an article in the Autumn number of the Harvard Business Review entitled, "Recent Literature on Money and Banking," by Joseph B. Hubbard.

### Monetary Policy and Stabilization

The first book on money that comes to my mind is one that provoked much discussion, including sharp criticism,

during the year, although it was actually published during 1934. I refer to "The Supply and Control of Money," by Lauchlin Currie. It concerns monetary policy, especially as it might be based on the quantity theory. Perhaps the most outspoken of the critics was Dr. Benjamin M. Anderson, Jr., who issued a thirty-two page pamphlet reprint of his address before the American Statistical Association in April, entitled, "A Critical Analysis of the Book by Lauchlin Currie. . . ." Anyone who attended that and similar meetings of the American Statistical Association or of the Academy of Political Science in the last two or three years must have become suddenly aware of the explosive quality of the economic discussion and writing of today. Even the most conservative financial librarian will find that she has dynamite on her shelves concealed in quite harmless-appearing volumes.

A bit of such dynamite appeared in the small volume by Irving Fisher entitled "100% Money, designed to keep checking banks 100% liquid." The idea of keeping 100% reserve in currency behind the demand deposits of the banks, with its concomitant schemes for money manipulation, seemed preposterous to the average stand-pat banker. However

it has gained considerable attention, and this clear presentation of the subject deserves a place in the financial library.

On the subject of monetary management or control and stabilization plans I, with difficulty, select three: Arthur D. Gayer's "Monetary Policy and Economic Stabilization," "The Future of Monetary Policy," by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, and "Controlling Depressions," by Paul Douglas.

Gayer believes that in spite of the difficulties involved, the case for the gold standard is not to be dismissed lightly. He is quite critical of the possibility of monetary management, in contrast to Irving Fisher, who has no reservations at all on that point.

The second book contains the platform of a study group of the Royal Institute of International Affairs under the chairmanship of Sir Charles Addis. They do not believe that the trade cycle is a purely monetary phenomena. Some form of international monetary system is favored.

Paul Douglas, the third author is not only Professor of Economics at Chicago University, but also chairman of a new political party called "American Commonwealth Political Federation," whose slogan is "Production for Use," (not profit). More may yet be heard of his ideas for a managed currency, and the socialization of banking and credit.

Among the less exciting but fundamentally useful books of a long-range character that we acquired are, "Theory of Money and Credit," by Ludwig Von Mises, and "German Monetary Theory," by Howard Ellis. The Von Mises book makes available in English translation a work long regarded on the continent as a standard text book of the Austrian school of thought of which Hayek is an exponent. It is the source of many ideas which have now found their way into common currency here. The other book

assembles and summarizes the vast array of conflicting German theories on money, prices and business cycles.

### Gold and Silver

Strangely enough, I could find no one comprehensive book this year on either of the very pressing problems of gold and silver. One must go back to 1932 for an outstanding study on silver, a Government pamphlet by Herbert M. Bratter, "The Silver Market," and to the "Silver Memorandum Agreement of 1933" (U. S. Executive Agreement Series No. 63), which shows which countries can and which cannot sell silver. I feel I must draw attention right here to a silver article of unusual interest that appeared in the "Annalist" for July 5, 1935, entitled, "Silver Coins to the Melting Pot; the Known Supply Awaiting Higher Prices," by Dickson H. Leavens. This contains a clever thermometer chart which shows what countries will lose their silver currency, and when, if the price of silver continues to rise in the United States. This is important as an indication of future sources of silver supplies.

The Annual Report of the Bank for International Settlements for 1934-5 should be mentioned in passing as a source for authoritative statistics relating to gold and currency, and for comment on the year's developments, such as the recent silver policy.

Two books on gold useful for reference purposes are, "British International Gold Movements and Banking Policy, 1881-1913," by W. Edwards<sup>†</sup> Beach, and "The Price of Gold; Documents Illustrating the Statutory Control Through the Bank of England of the Market Price of Gold, 1694-1931," by I.<sup>†</sup> Shrigley.

### International Economic Problems

Carl Iversen's book, "Aspects of the Theory of International Capital Move-

ments," contains much information not readily available.

Probably more speculative curiosity has been expended on the subject of exchange stabilization funds than on any other one subject, chiefly because of the official secrecy and reticence. Nothing has yet appeared in print on the operation of our own fund, but for the British fund there is one book entitled "Exchange Equalization Account," by Norman F. Hall. While not completely satisfying, it contains probably all that can be gleaned by the general public today on the operating details of the fund.

### Banking

The first full report of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation for the year ending December 31, 1934 does great credit to a new organization in its comprehensive statistics. Besides all conceivable figures on deposit insurance and related banking developments, it includes research reports on losses to depositors in suspended banks and basic data on bank failures.

Two noteworthy books on the sad but very topical subject of bank failures are, "American Bank Failures," by C. Daniel Bremer, and "State Bank Failures in Michigan," by Robert G. Rodkey (Michigan University). These are pioneer works as little research has been done hitherto in this field.

Several useful booklets have been issued on the Banking Act of 1935, including the very comprehensive eighty-nine page pamphlet of the American Bankers Association, and two others by the Manufacturers Trust Company of New York and the Commerce Clearing House, all of which give the full text as well as analysis and comment.

An excellent little booklet that has created more stir with its brief seventy-five pages than many books several times its size is "Trust Investments in

Pennsylvania," published in September by the Pennsylvania Bankers Association as a result of the painstaking work of its Committee on Trust Investments. Its exhaustive information makes it of great value to trust investment officers.

### Chiefly Facts

Thus do I classify a few titles that do not belong together except as factual standbys for the financial librarian. One is "The International Money Markets," by J. T. Madden and Marcus Nadler. This describes the money markets of New York, London, Paris, Berlin, Amsterdam and Switzerland; also discusses conditions in the international money markets generally. Another is "Foreign Bondholders and American State Debts," by R. C. McGrane which is interesting historically. It recites the circumstances surrounding the origin of the American State Debt controversy in the hope that it may throw some light on the subject of repudiation. The National Industrial Conference Board has published some interesting figures in its "Machinery, Employment and Purchasing Power" to show how baseless are the statements that machinery in displacing men has increased unemployment.

### Stimulating Ideas

One of our research men told me that he got a "thrill" out of the new ideas in the following two books (not so apparent, I confess, to a mere librarian): "Liquid Claims and National Wealth," by A. A. Berle and V. J. Pederson, and "Industrial Prices and their Relative Inflexibility," by Gardiner Means for the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The first opens up the question of what constitutes true liquidity in wealth. It gives "an admirably thorough analysis of the conception of liquidity distinguishable as 'shiftability' or 'marketability



with price stability' as against the older notion of a maturing self-liquidating asset flowing toward consumption." Gardiner Means's pamphlet on industrial prices breaks down the constituents of the Bureau of Labor index of wholesale prices and points out that some prices hardly move at all while others fluctuate widely. This would have an important bearing on the question of credit control and so would be of special interest.

I had hoped to lighten what seems a rather "heavy" list by including a few books that make interesting reading, if somewhat disappointing from a research and statistical point of view. One might be mentioned, "The Nature of the

Capitalist Crisis," by John Strachey. This is written in readable style and briefly summarizes in gratifying fashion for the lay reader the various recognized explanations for the existence of economic crises. Many others commenting on current problems, often with vehemence and partisanship, pass over the desk of the financial librarian as they pour forth from the presses but have to be rejected for practical business use, however stimulating for private perusal.

Only the 1935 books of proved usefulness in our library have been included here, and that fact may make the list helpful even though its scope is admittedly limited by our own special interests.

## Imported Books in Special Libraries

*By Margaret N. Smith*

MYRIADS of words are annually poured forth by the presses on how to do anything from raising pigs to becoming a crooner or movie actor. In all this verbal tonnage of wanted and unwanted advice, small bits occasionally occur which are intended to enlighten librarians — even special librarians. It seems odd that so little has been published on the seemingly simple feat of ordering books, and that little applies generally to public libraries. The character of material used by the special library differs markedly from that used by the average public library, whose main source and supply of material is books.

The technical librarian, probably more than others, must purchase all sorts of foreign as well as American publications for her library, either by direct order or through an agent or jobber. The large library with adequate clerical help may find it to their advantage to place all their orders directly with the publishers. In the small one-man library where the librarian assumes all the duties and re-

sponsibilities of purchasing and ordering, record-keeping, cataloging, circulation routine, and reference work, it is advantageous to place orders through an agent, particularly foreign orders. The necessary reference works for verifying information concerning material are not usually found in small libraries due to their excessive cost and relatively infrequent use, and large public or institutional libraries in which such source material can be found are not always near at hand. Even if such a library is available, some of the special librarian's time must be spent to obtain the desired information. While agents have faults, and make errors like everyone else (except librarians!) they do offer a considerable service to their clientele.

The scientific or technical library with its high proportion of foreign publications, has more to gain through the use of an agent than a library whose interest is in domestic publications. To secure the best service, orders for foreign publications must be placed with the proper

sources which is sometimes the publisher, occasionally the printer, the editor, and in some instances, the secretary of an organization or institution. The one-man library does not have enough orders to become familiar with all the quirks of foreign publications, so that each order for uncommon material raises a fresh problem of where and with whom to place the order. An agent has not only the advantage of a large volume of foreign orders, but the additional one of a foreign correspondent to aid him in locating and securing information about the material he wishes to purchase. Not only is the librarian relieved of correspondence concerning purchases to be read or translated but bills are rendered in that medium understood by all accounting departments — United States' dollars and cents. Nothing can be more startling than when the accounting department show charges for \$20.10, — their interpretation of 20 marks, 10 pfennigs! The payment and non-payment of charges often causes the librarian considerable correspondence in languages other than English.

Whether or not to order periodicals through an agent is a question with strong feelings on both sides. It is quite possible for the one-man library to order foreign periodicals directly from the

publisher and get good service. However, with some periodicals, particularly German ones which are billed by the volume, and which issue an indeterminate number of volumes during the year, it is easier to transact the business through an agent than to be continually checking and paying the bills issued with each volume. This is also true of scientific series and monographs, which are published in a long series of volumes, appearing one at a time over a long period of time, and in some cases, not in sequence.

Pamphlets and advertising literature vary so much in use and application in different libraries, that orders for such materials are best handled directly to the source by the librarian. However, material published by foreign governments can often be secured by an agent more easily, for, by placing the order with him, it is not necessary to ascertain the exact price, or secure a bank draft to send with the order. However, a library using a great volume of material from any one government, in all probability, would have a depository account to draw against and place their orders directly for the publications desired. Some organizations have affiliated companies in other countries to act as their library's agent for books and pamphlet material in that country.

## Conference News

**P**LANS are on foot for an informal and delightful convention at the Mt. Royal, Montreal, June 16-19, 1936. There have been rumors of special efforts to enable people to "get acquainted" promptly. Perhaps there will be a definite meeting place for tea every afternoon. Montreal expects to go even further than other hostess chapters in seeing that all comers meet those with allied interests.

Constructive plans are under way for

the formal activities of the organization. Montreal can be the delightful destination for a motor trip. It can be reached expeditiously by overnight trains from New York. It is the objective of many convenient bus routes. The date of the convention is most appropriate for the beginning or the end of a vacation. All in all, every member of S. L. A. has good reason to plan for attendance at the Montreal convention in June.

## Work in the Science Museum Library

*By H. Philip Spratt*

SCIENCE MUSEUM LIBRARY, LONDON

THE Science Museum Library is the British national central library devoted to all branches of pure and applied science. It is open free to the public, practically without restriction, from 10:00 A.M. to 5:50 P.M. on all week-days except bank holidays. Admission is by ticket, which can be obtained on written application to the "Director, Science Museum, London, S. W. 7," or by personal application at the entrance to the library. The aim of the library is to assist those occupied in scientific research work, and to render readily accessible the information contained in scientific and technical literature. The interdependence of the various branches of science has necessitated this central reference library of pure and applied science, in order to supplement the more restricted scope and difficult selective task of specialised libraries. The staff of the library (under the Director of the Science Museum) consists of a Keeper and three other administrative officers, all of whom are scientific specialists, four lady-assistants (also of university honours standard), and an operative personnel of 16 attendants. The accessions department, which is at present accommodated in a separate office, comprises a clerical staff of 11 under a clerical officer.

**HISTORICAL NOTE.**—The library owes its existence to Sir Henry de la Beche, who in 1843 contributed the whole of his valuable collection of scientific books to form its nucleus. This was subsequently increased with purchases and with numerous donations from scientific societies both in Great Britain and abroad, as well as from private donors. To meet the de-

mands of the School of Mines, when that institution was founded in 1851, the collections were further developed into a library of natural science, unrivalled of its kind. In 1854 a special exhibition of educational appliances and books was held in London, and much of the material from this was afterwards handed over to the Science and Art Department, under whose auspices the (now) Science Museum was founded in 1857. This collection was placed in a portion of the museum's temporary iron structure and accommodation for readers was also provided. The library was then further developed on the lines of an Educational Library, to which was added in 1876 the library that had been formed at the central office of the Committee of the Council on Education. The need of a national central library of science was realised as a result of the reconstitution of the Department of Science and Art, and from 1883 onward the scientific books of the Educational Library, enriched from various other sources, have formed what is now known as the Science Museum Library. Since that date, the scope of the library has comprised mathematics, the natural and physical sciences, and their applications; or in other words, all branches of pure and technical science.

**SURVEY OF PUBLICATIONS.**—An efficient accessions department should acquire most of the new publications within the special scope of the library on its own initiative, in order to anticipate readers' requirements and thus avoid the inevitable delay which must occur when a publication has to be obtained in response to a requisition. For this pur-

pose, a comprehensive survey of new publications is the first essential. From the commencement of the year 1931, such a current survey of the world's scientific and technical literature has been carried out in the Science Museum Library, based on the more important primary national book-lists which have already been annotated and listed for reference in one of the writer's recent articles.<sup>1</sup> The selection there quoted is not exhaustive; it lacks, for example, the Russian "Kniznaya Letopis" which on account of its different alphabet requires separate treatment, but which in some respects approaches our ideal<sup>2</sup> of what a primary (i.e. uncritical and non-specialised) national book-list should be.

#### CUMULATIVE INTERNATIONAL INDEX.

—The relevant items are carefully selected from these primary national book-lists, and assembled into a secondary (i.e. critical and specialised) international current index of the world's scientific and technical literature. Where references extracted from such diverse sources have to be intercalated into one uniform alphabetical series, formidable difficulties are encountered due to the present lamentable lack of international standardisation. For example, a German reference to certain publications of the Deutsches Museum had to have the town-name MUNICH added in accordance with our code, before it could be intercalated into the index. No doubt a German visitor would expect to find the same publications under MUENCHEN, but he would be disappointed; this example is therefore quoted, not as a complaint (we could hardly expect the Germans to use the word "Munich" for our special benefit), but to show what an enormous help it would be to librarians

all over the world if international standardisation would come to the help of international coöperation.<sup>3</sup> With reference to practical aspects of the work involved in the compilation of this international card-index of scientific and technical literature, the fact that special one-sided editions of the primary national book-lists are in most cases unobtainable, emphasizes how little the requirements of librarians are provided for. The only alternative is, of course, to order two copies of each (double-sided) issue, since the selected references in these often overlap. The references are cut out and mounted on the international standard size index-cards, 125 x 75 mm. (5 x 3 in.) by a special hot-press method which does not distort the cards. A space of about 13 mm. (0.5 inch) is allowed between the top of the card and the top of the mounted reference, so that the latter can if necessary be re-headed to accord with the code of the library. This cumulative index contains at present about 30,000 entries, and continues to be built up at the rate of about 150 references per week.

ACQUISITION OF PUBLICATIONS.—The above-mentioned index serves to provide necessary details as to price, date and place of publication, in order to complete the (often) inadequate information on readers' requisition forms; and for this purpose it will continue to become more and more useful, until such time as most of the publications asked for will be dated subsequent to 1931, the year of its commencement. But an efficient accessions department should anticipate readers' requirements and acquire publications on its own initiative, and here also our cumulative index fulfils a useful function as a basis for the selective acquisition of books either as purchases or presentations. The former

<sup>1</sup> Spratt (H. P.). "Technical Science Libraries." Year's Work in Librarianship. Vol. VI (1933), Chap. VII, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Spratt (H. P.). "Further Notes on Scientific and Technical Libraries of Northern Europe." *Library Quarterly*, Vol. IV, No. 4 (Oct. 1934), p. 636.

<sup>3</sup> Spratt (H. P.). "International Coöperation in Technical Science" *European Herald*. 28th September 1934, p. 11.

are obtained from H. M. Stationery Office who act as intermediaries for the library; the annual purchase vote is nominally 3,000 pounds (less national economy-cuts), and will in fact be 2,900 pounds (14,000 dollars) for this year 1935. The issue of orders for publications which have been selected for purchase is commercial routine which can be carried out with an unspecialised clerical staff, and this aspect need not concern us further here. For the presentations, the library has to thank numerous authors, editors and scientific institutions all over the world. As will be readily understood, this involves an extensive international correspondence, for which the additional use of French and German places the library in this respect on as international a basis as can reasonably be expected.<sup>3</sup> The rate of accessions to the library is now 10,000 volumes per annum, of which about 8,000 are presentations. Some 9,000 current scientific periodicals are received.

**REGISTRATION.**—All new acquisitions are entered on the card-indexes of the accessions department immediately on arrival. To check the current receipt of periodicals, a visible card-index is used (Kardex system). This is very convenient in practice for the insertion of new entries, and the use of coloured celluloid indicators enables a continual survey of the receipt of current periodicals to be easily maintained. Publications which have been duly entered in the accessions department are passed up to the library and are there stamped with their date of receipt. Purchases are stamped in red, and presentations in black.

**CATALOGUE DEPARTMENT.**—The code used in the library is in all essentials the same as that of the British Museum, with certain small modifications. Text books are entered under the surname of the author; independent periodicals under their titles (definite and indefinite arti-

cles omitted); and the transactions of corporate bodies under the name of the respective town or country. The references are first hand-written on paper slips 8 x 3.25 in. (i.e. one-quarter foolscap size), and contain full details of the publication with decimal classification number, size in centimetres, and month of acquisition into the library. These hand-written slips with main entries and cross-references are collected at the end of each week and reproduced in the form of an accession list; this is subsequently cut up and its individual entries each mounted on a standard card 125 x 75 mm. (5 x 3 in.), for intercalation into the library's author and subject-matter card-indexes. The former contains at present about 172,000 entries, to which some 13,000 are added each year; the latter contains about 203,000 entries, with an annual increment of 16,000. References of all new periodical publications acquired in the library are added to a separate cumulative index from which the latest edition of the "Hand List of Current Periodicals in the Science Museum Library" will be printed in the near future.

**WEEKLY ACCESSION LISTS.**—Since the commencement of the year 1931, full particulars of the library accessions have been issued in the form of weekly lists, which contain references to all new publications received in the library. The references are minutely classified in accordance with their subject-matter, by means of the decimal system. Generally, several subject-matter classification numbers are provided for each reference, so that copies may be filed under all subjects with which the particular reference is concerned. The weekly lists of accessions are printed on one side only of the paper, so that the references can be readily cut up and mounted separately on index cards of the standard international size, 125 x 75 mm. (5 x 3 in.), and incorporated into a cumulative card-

index either alphabetically by author, or decimally by subject-matter. A brief key to the Decimal Classification is provided on the back cover of each list. The total number of references amounts to about 10,000 per year; so that these lists of accessions represent a valuable summary of current scientific and technical literature. References to important literature published abroad are comparatively numerous, and include many items not represented in any other current index to which access in Great Britain is available. The lists are issued in return for publications which the library desires to acquire, and their circulation at present amounts to about 120 copies per week.

**BOOK-STORES.**—The national collections of the Science Museum Library now contain 240,000 volumes, to which are added about 10,000 each year. The main store, which is provided with an electric book-lift, has a floor area of 2500 square feet. Half of this space is occupied with 150 movable stacks, on rollers which run on steel rails let into the floor; while economical of floor space, these have been found to have drawbacks, and their use will therefore not be extended in the future. These movable stacks accommodate some 45,000 volumes of scientific transactions, which are shelved in alphabetical order under the names of the towns or countries in which the respective societies or institutions are located (i.e. in accordance with the same code as that used for the library's author card-index). The other half of the main book-store is provided with fixed stacks which contain about 45,000 text books. These are shelved in broad subject-matter divisions in accordance with the decimal classification scheme, and within those broad divisions alphabetically under the name of the author. The library annex accommodates on fixed stacks about 25,000 volumes of independent

periodicals (as distinct from transactions of societies), which are shelved in alphabetical order under their titles. A basement store contains the library's extensive collection of patent specifications, and such literature as is in relatively infrequent demand. The free space available for new books is now nearly exhausted, and temporary accommodation has had to be set apart to house accessions until the planned extensions are built.

**LOANS DEPARTMENT.**—In order that the widest use may be made of the national collections, books are lent within the British Isles, to approved institutions at which scientific research is carried out, to students and research workers themselves via the libraries of their societies, institutions or universities, and to the public via the National Central Library. Loans are not issued direct to the public; and books which are rare or of exceptional value, works of reference, and the current parts of periodicals are not available for loan outside the library premises. There are now about 350 institutions on our loan list, to whom some 18,000 books were issued in the course of last year. This loan list is maintained in the form of a card-index on 8 x 5 in. cards. Separate requisitions for each work must be made in duplicate on the printed forms, books of which are issued to the approved institutions. When the work is issued on loan, one of these requisitions is shelved in its place as a check, and the other is filed in the card-index under the respective institution. Books on loan must be returned within two weeks, and a system of coloured tabs affixed to the requisitions in the card-index assures that a postcard reminder be issued to the respective institution when this period becomes due; in practice it is found that such reminders are almost invariably required. As the bulk of our loans are ultimately for the use of practical research workers, it is

necessary to emphasize that the books must not be used in laboratories or workshops where there is any risk of their deterioration; in some cases it even has to be stipulated that the books shall only be used in the library of the respective institution and not removed therefrom until it is returned to the Science Museum Library.

**READING ROOM.**—This spacious hall is situated on the first floor. One enters between the cabinets of the author card-index which, like an avenue, lead up to the Superintendent's counter, where all newly acquired books are exhibited for the period of one month. This side which faces the entrance door, contains the windows, under which are shelved encyclopedias, technical dictionaries, and other standard works of reference. The opposite wall as well as the two end walls are lined with book shelves, nine deep on each of the two upper balconies, where about 35,000 volumes which form the older part of the collection of periodicals are shelved. The total floor area amounts to 3,000 square feet, one-third of which is taken up with the cabinets of the subject-matter index described in the next section; the other two-thirds provide accommodation for 72 readers. Last year there were 23,500 visitors to the library, and 28,500 books were issued to them. Readers are not permitted free access to the bookshelves; the available literature can be ascertained more readily from the card-indexes. All requisitions for books have to be made on the printed forms supplied, only one work on each form, which should then be handed to an attendant. The recent parts of some 500 current periodicals are placed at the immediate disposal of readers without requisition. Diffused illumination is used, and small electric lamps are placed in addition on the readers' tables. Two spiral staircases lead up to the main book-store, and small doors in the two ends of the

hall lead respectively to the administrative offices and to the library annex.

**SUBJECT-MATTER INDEX.**—The library collects the scientific and technical references to books and to articles in periodicals extracted from all published documentation services which are classified in accordance with the Decimal Classification system. These are incorporated, at the rate of about 150,000 entries per annum, into a colossal card-index which already contains well over two million cards of the international standard size 125 x 75 mm. (5 x 3 in.) filed in 50 cabinets. Since these are systematically filed in very minute classes, readers are able readily to locate the articles on any specific subject under the respective classification number, which is first ascertained from the alphabetical catch-word index of subjects. This vast documentation also serves for the compilation of reference lists on specific subjects.

**INFORMATION SERVICE.**—Lists of references are compiled by the scientific staff of the library in answer to specific enquiries. Within their specialized subject-matter, these cover a wider survey than do the lists of accessions mentioned above, because their references are not restricted to books and articles in the Science Museum Library, nor exclusively to current publications. About 100 to 120 such lists are compiled each year, with a total of about 3,000 references. It is of interest to note that two-thirds of the total number of enquiries received are for references on applied science. This service is free within the British Empire; otherwise, such lists are compiled at the rate of 2d. per reference, with 5s. as the minimum price of a list. In order to keep them within reasonable size, these reference lists compiled in the Science Museum Library must necessarily be selective from one or more points of view. One of the most extensive lists which has been produced in the library

was that compiled in connection with the special Plastics Industry Exhibition, which opened at the Science Museum in April, 1933. This contains a total of about 1,500 references, in spite of the fact that its scope was restricted by the exclusion of ceramics, artificial stone, paints, varnishes and artificial silk. The first section (56 references) comprises a survey of already published reference lists on plastics. The library also publishes two serial or current reference lists: (a) Applied Geo-

physics, and (b) Lubrication. These reference lists, as well as the weekly lists of accessions, are also issued in return for publications which the library desires to acquire. Photostat copies of articles or illustrations can be supplied at rates which are quoted on application. In its documentation and information services, the Science Museum Library acts in close collaboration with the Institut International de Documentation, for which it forms in fact an international centre.

## A Short Cut for Libraries in Investment Houses

*By Mildred A. Lee*

LIBRARIAN, ATLAS CORPORATION

**M**Y EXPERIENCE, as well as that of other librarians, has been that it is difficult to serve officers and directors of the corporation selectively. When they request information on a certain corporation or industry, they should not be overwhelmed with a mass of material, but at the same time they should receive sufficient data on which to base a general idea of the value of a corporation or the statistical position of the industry.

Consequently we have set up what we call our "Special Files" as follows:

### A. Corporation files

These files include material on about 150 corporations contained in our portfolio, together with data on other companies which we considered important. The files are divided into four classifications, namely, Utilities, Oils, Railroads and Industrials, since the practice of covering one of these groups at a time at the portfolio meetings made this convenient. These files are frequently consulted then and a good bit of time is saved by this arrangement. All members of the Statistical Department assisted in

making up these corporate files, thus everybody was able to familiarize themselves with what was in the library. Incidentally, it gave the research staff a quick method of determining how much, or I might also say how little, information there was on a corporation in the library.

In these corporate files we have placed the last two annual reports, the latest interim reports if available, otherwise news clippings of earnings or estimates of earnings, the latest listings, statements, prospectuses, reports by the statistical department, good analyses by investment firms or the services and any other pertinent data. The purpose is to keep these files as small as possible, by replacing reports with later ones as they are issued. The library might have seven or eight different folders on a corporation, which would scare anyone not interested in making a detailed study of a corporation. On the other hand I have noticed that there is in many cases just enough in these special files to arouse the interest of officers and directors and make them ask for more.



**B. Industry files**

For the particular purpose of the industry files, it was decided to set up 45 separate folders pertaining to the following divisions:

Advertising, Publishing and Printing  
Agricultural Machinery  
Aircraft—Manufacturing and Transport  
Alcohol—Industrial and Beverage  
Amusements—Motion Pictures and Theatres  
Automobile accessories  
Automobiles  
Building—Materials and Construction  
Chemicals  
Coal  
Communications  
Containers—Metal and Glass  
Drugs, Soap and Cosmetics  
Electrical Equipment—Industrial and Household  
Financing and Credit  
Food Products (Dairy)  
    "      "      (Meat Packing)  
    "      "      (Misc.)  
Furniture and Floor Covering  
Investment Trusts  
Iron and Steel  
Machinery and Machine Tools  
Mining and Metals (Gold and Silver)  
    "      "      (Copper)  
    "      "      (Tin)  
    "      "      (Lead)  
    "      "      (Zinc)  
    "      "      (Nickel)  
    "      "      (Misc.)  
Office Equipment  
Oils  
Paper  
Railroad Equipment  
Railroads  
Retail (Chain Store and Restaurants)  
    "      (Department Stores)  
    "      (Mail Order)  
    "      (Misc.)  
Rubber and Tires  
Shoes and Leather  
Sugars  
Textiles and Apparel  
Tobacco and Tobacco Products  
Utilities (Electric Power and Gas)  
    "      (Transit)

The subjects were made as broad as possible and were drawn from Standard, Fitch, Poors and New York Stock Exchange classifications of industries. Following the method used in making up the corporate files, members of the Statistical Department went through the library files and selected for these forty-five folders, important analyses of the industries, latest government statistical reports, trade association bulletins, etc. Even reports from Poor, Fitch and Standard Trade and Securities Service were taken out of the binders. This has been a time saver for the library since it means looking in one place instead of three. Where detailed statistics are kept currently we have not placed any monthly or weekly reports in the industry files as those are already included in records kept.

Of course it must be borne in mind that these special files are not for the use of those making a detailed study. Their purpose is simply to furnish a cross section of the whole library.

**Correction**

In SPECIAL LIBRARIES for December, page 290, the Technical Book Review Bulletin, published by the New York Public Library was listed without price. According to later information, the charge is 25 cents a year. The publication is issued quarterly and the full title is "New Technical Books; A Selected List on Industrial Arts and Engineering."

**Note!**

"The assemblage of any considerable body of chemists always makes it advisable to provide proper intelligence service. This consists of a chemically trained personnel, preferably with library experience. This intelligence service is called upon to answer innumerable questions and it can save for the research chemist days or weeks of time."

## President's Page

A FEW remarks this month on our newest periodical, the Technical Book Review Index. I speak of it as our publication. It is a separate, self-supporting production, sponsored and motivated by Special Libraries Association and edited by one of our most efficient members.

Prior to 1928 the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh published a somewhat similar index under the direction of Elwood H. McClelland. Each year following its demise revealed more clearly that it had filled a real need and that librarians were now being handicapped in their selection of technical books for purchase.

By the Spring of 1934 certain forward looking members of S. L. A. were considering the possibilities of currently presenting this information. In June the Science-Technology Group came to the fore, asking the Executive Board to consider the feasibility, sponsorship, form, frequency and selling price of such a publication and to take suitable action.

A special committee was appointed to canvass the situation; a publicity program was approved; and a pre-publication selling campaign was put in motion. A minimum of three hundred subscriptions was required by the Board. At the Boston Convention in June, 1935, this mark having been surpassed, publication was definitely authorized.

Beginning last September, monthly numbers of twenty or more pages have appeared. The most acute problem has been that of cutting material to space requirements, without sacrificing essential items in the process.

In the hope of strengthening the rather precarious position of this infant periodical, an application was made last Summer to the Carnegie Corporation of New

York for a grant of three thousand dollars for the support of the Index. A letter, dated November 12th, brought the information that our request had been approved in full.

Quite aside from the money angle, I was much gratified at a prominent implication of this grant. The Corporation is governed by a board, composed of scientists, financiers, lawyers, doctors and directors of large commercial and industrial enterprises, which applies the knowledge and experience of the world of affairs to the visionary and idealistic plans of specialists, librarians, social workers and others who seek funds. So, when I learned that our request had successfully run the gauntlet, I was very proud to feel that Special Libraries Association has acquired a reputation for bringing its projects to satisfactory conclusion—for successfully mingling the practical and the ideal.

The Technical Book Review Index Committee presented, on December 7th, a well-balanced plan for a limited increase in size, a better subject index, additional editorial work and a promotional campaign in foreign countries, where the Index has already attracted favorable attention. The Executive Board approved the expenditure of not over seven hundred dollars along these lines and directed that the balance of twenty-three hundred be held in a savings account.

Such, in brief, is the history and present situation. Individual mention may be made of Miss Marian C. Manley for intensive promotional work, of Miss Ruth Savord for tactful negotiations with the Carnegie Corporation, and of Miss Granville Meixell for very competent and painstaking editorship.

HOWARD L. STEBBINS, *President*.

## When Business Uses the Library

*By Rebecca B. Rankin, Librarian*

MUNICIPAL REFERENCE LIBRARY, NEW YORK

*Extracts from paper prepared for the Second International Congress of Libraries, Madrid, May 1935  
and printed in the Proceedings of the Association*

"PUTTING knowledge to work" is the slogan of the Special Libraries Association and nowhere can it be better exemplified than in the business libraries. Business has taken on many of the characteristics of a new science in the past few decades, and these developments are reflected in a whole new body of business literature. That part of the field of business which is known and available to all has found its way into books; but business as a science is constantly growing and new methods and new processes are described in magazines, in pamphlets and other ephemeral material. These too form an important part of a special library and its informational files. Altogether there is a flood of material for the business library, and the business librarian must possess a fine sense of discrimination and be very familiar with sources in order to choose the type of information which will prove most valuable to the company for which he serves as a bureau of information.

The Special Library in an industrial or commercial firm is usually the first approach to any problem. The library serves as the heart of the organization and is the one place which has a record of all past experimentations and accomplishments. One large industrial corporation, for instance, has a standing rule that all researchers, specialists and experts must consult the library first before starting any new work. By this means, the specialist is informed of any previous attempt along a similar line by any of the divisions and can readily learn of any

studies by other firms or educational institutions, and thirdly, it may give all theoretical material which is available in print, or the librarian usually can advise as to other sources of information. A special library many times can produce just the type of information which the firm needs to guide it in a projected enterprise, and thereby much expense is saved; it was common a few decades ago for business to make all its researches directly in the field and without recourse to the printed word.

The special library also is the last resort of a business research; the library is the conservator of facts. The business librarian is careful to store up the facts of current experience, arranging them in files and indexing sufficiently so they may be brought forth again after the discovery or creation has been forgotten. The alert special librarian not only is a conservator, salvaging scraps of information here and there but he keeps track of all developments within the company and is ever watchful of similar developments elsewhere and acquires them, before demanded by busy executives, visualizing the probable informational needs in advance. The business librarian actually selects the printed material which can be put to work and then sees to it that the knowledge therein is put to work.

Some of America's largest corporations have several special libraries, in accordance with the division of its responsibilities—for example, a legal library, an engineering library and an economic

collection. But more likely all of such functions would fall to one librarian. In a typical day you might find any business librarian called upon to do such tasks as these: supplying facts and illustrations to its advertising department to be used as the basis for copy; making a digest of all state laws affecting the manufacture or sale of a certain new product; looking up patents of a specific kind; furnishing specific trade and geographical facts to the foreign trade department; compiling for a vice-president the new materials for an address on a certain subject; gathering together the tax rates of many states and cities on a certain type of product; advising the accounting department of new books and current magazine articles in its field; sending descriptions of a new process of manufacture to the engineering department. The business librarian actually serves as eyes and ears for the busy executives of his company. He sweeps the field of progress for precedents, indexes, guides and dangers in order that he may relay them to the officials and the workers who have the responsibility of carrying on a business which involves great investment of capital and which looks toward profits. The library has its indirect share in creating those profits. More likely the special library can point to direct savings which it has been able to effectuate for the company.

The library of a commercial or industrial firm is primarily a service department but its efficiency is not dependent on office mechanics but on proper development of policy and on coöperation with and from every other department in the firm. Often the library is directly under the supervision of a vice-president or high executive where it is on par with other large departments as the legal or accounting departments. In many instances also, the library may be a part of the research department or closely allied

to it. This is a natural and logical development. Often as not the special librarian may be the head of the research department as well, or designated as director of information, either of which titles indicate his functions.

The business library is called upon to prepare memoranda or to make a more extensive study and report or to direct a questionnaire for a specific purpose, to edit a house organ or magazine, to compile bibliographies or extensive study lists of books or reading, to prepare digests of magazine articles or abstracts of foreign literature and books. Its work may be very diversified and its librarian must be well versed in the commercial or industrial field covered.

Arthur D. Little, head of one of the leading chemical laboratories in the United States, makes this statement: "These laboratories should each be developed around a special library, the business of which should be to collect, compile, and classify in a way to make instantly available every scrap of information bearing upon the materials, methods, products, and requirements of the industry concerned. . . . As it is the function of such a laboratory to extend our knowledge, it cannot function properly unless its working units are strengthened and refreshed and stimulated by the constant stream of facts, theories, and opinions which it is the purpose of the library to supply."

Such libraries in the United States are marching ahead constantly; where in 1909 there were only a handful there are now about seven hundred well-organized libraries. The growth has been steady and in one sense phenomenal and yet we feel we are on the threshold of greater expansion. Large business corporations to the number of 500,000 exist in the United States and that gives us untold possibilities for growth and equally great opportunities for service.

## What the College or Institution Expects of Its Departmental Libraries

*By Karl L. Wildes*

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING,  
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

THE three requirements for a Departmental Library are that it should be: *First*—adequate in scope *Second*—easily accessible *Third*—administered in such a way as to promote its use. Departmental Libraries usually have their origin in personal collections of professors who find a need for books and periodicals in a special field. The time soon arrives, however, when the demand by students is greater than can be borne by these personal accumulations, and a move has to be made in the direction of organization for the loan of special books.

In order to be adequate to the needs of the students and staff the collection should contain all of the important text books in the field, both recent and old. From these text books teachers will get new viewpoints and will be helped in the presentation of subject matter in class and in conference, the older books serving to show the historic development of any particular phase of a subject. These books will also be of use to the student attempting to obtain an understanding of points which may have been missed in class, or not adequately treated in his own text book.

There should be bound copies, as complete as possible, of all important periodicals in the field, both domestic and foreign. There should also be on display for reference use a good variety of semi-popular magazines, as well as the publications of the learned societies of the profession or closely related professions. Collateral books, classics and current

treatises, are also important in order to intensify as well as to broaden the treatments found in text books.

A collection of rare books which might constitute a museum is stimulating and interesting, but of course not absolutely essential from the utilitarian point of view.

It is assumed, of course, that access may be had to a good general library outside of the departmental collection, for fiction, biography and travel. It is also advisable to have this departmental library tied in with others in related fields. In the case of our Vail Library of Electrical Engineering, for example, it is very important that our students should have access to books on mathematics, physics, economics and social science.

The question of accessibility has gone through considerable evolution in our case. A departmental library probably existed in the early days of the department, but the addition of the Vail collection in 1913 made the Electrical Engineering departmental library so notable that it needed a librarian of its own.

The origin of this Vail collection is interesting. An eccentric Englishman by the name of George Edward Dering became interested in the telegraphic and physical sciences. In order to keep his information abreast of the times, he asked a London bookseller to send down to his new library all books on electricity which he could collect from all parts of the world. The order was filled and the cases of books were sent to Mr. Dering's

library, but strangely enough were never opened due to a change in Mr. Dering's interests.\*

Mr. Theodore N. Vail, then President of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, heard that these books were available and immediately purchased them and presented them to M.I.T. This nucleus, with its subsequent additions, is called the Vail Library in honor of its donor.

This collection, now pretty complete in the field of electrical engineering, was given quarters near the offices, classrooms and laboratories of the department it was to serve. The advantageous location, together with the services of the Vail Librarian, made the books and periodicals easily accessible to the people who would use them most.

It was not long, however, before the isolation of the electrical engineering library from the other collections, especially in mathematics, physics, economics and social science, and the separate cataloguing were felt to be unfortunate. This situation was remedied first by moving the Vail Library to the Central Library and merging the two catalogues.

In December 1931, the report of a special committee on the library was adopted by the Faculty, and this brought about a change in policy in connection with the several departmental libraries which had sprung up all over the Institute. The new policy provided that:

1. That the principal library collections be maintained as a central library, and that branch libraries be concentrated in a few group libraries (instead of many small collections), each with suitable professional library attendance under the direction of the Institute Librarian.

2. That small branch or departmental libraries be abolished by consolidation

with conveniently located branch libraries of group character as far as practicable, and no further such small libraries be maintained independently from Institute funds.

The whole policy of arrangement is continually being worked out with a view to improvement in accessibility.

The administration of the library is perhaps the most important of the three requirements I have laid down. The setting of the policies by the general librarian and by general or special committees of the Institution are, of course, very important, but the value of the departmental library is largely dependent upon the capabilities of the departmental librarian. We have been fortunate in having, within my association with the Vail Library, two librarians, Mrs. Ruth M. Lane, and Mrs. Katharine Maynard, both exceptionally good reference librarians, and also excellent in their ability to instruct students in the use of the library and to publicize the advantages of the departmental collection and thus to stimulate its use.

One of the functions of the Vail Librarian and her assistant is to keep the collection adequate. This is done by scanning the technical publishers' advance notices and keeping a file of "Books to be Published" with dates, by reading book review columns in all electrical and allied periodicals and keeping a file of interesting items, and by ordering, sometimes after consultation with members of the staff, any books or pamphlets which promise to be useful.

The Vail Librarian publicizes the new acquisitions by posting attractive lists on department bulletin boards, and by calling the attention of staff members or graduate students to new books or articles in a specific field of investigation. She gives a lecture to the students entering upon their professional work in the sophomore year in order to show them

\* See "The Vail Library at M.I.T." by Ruth M. Lane, Vail Librarian. *The Library Journal*, Vol. 49, No. 5, 1924.

the facilities at their disposal, and to show them what can be done with library reference and research. She publishes articles in the *Technology Review* and in the *Tech Engineering News*, in order to call to the attention of Alumni or students, special facilities or exhibits of the Vail Library.

The reference work done by the departmental librarian is of great value, especially to the teaching and research staff. Perhaps the best example I can give from my personal experience is the help Mrs. Maynard gave me when, in the first years of my association with our Cooperative Course in Electrical Engineering, I made an extensive study of the development of cooperative education. The technique of collecting reference material is a real art and I confess it is still a mystery to me how a librarian finds with such competence such material

as Mrs. Maynard placed at my disposal on this occasion. This reference work is also indispensable in the cases of students doing seminar or thesis work.

It would be impossible to make an exhaustive list of the functions of the Vail Librarian. Perhaps a concise way to put it is to say that she keeps closely in touch with the needs and desires of the department and then promptly sees that these needs and desires are supplied.

The Department of Electrical Engineering is continually developing new educational processes, such as honors groups, individualized programs of studies, and special handling of laboratory work, each of which imposes a special function upon the Vail Library. From the user's point of view, I find this library adequate in scope, readily accessible and it is administered with excellent personal attention and efficiency.

## Snips and Snipes

*Open Letter.* . . . Dear Meg Manleygree, while yo' all 're baskin' in Florida, we're snowed in by nine inches of snow, our river is choked with ice and the paper says "Fair and colder tomorrow," but we hope in spite of the unfairness of life, that you're having a good time. . . .

*S'il Vous Plait.* . . . "What do Ethiopians eat for breakfast?" "How much does a gas mask cost in Russia?" "What station does the Bordeaux train leave from?" Just dial S. V. P. the next time you're in Paris and the Service Bureau of the Paris Telephone Company will tell you — for a price. This new department has just been installed according to the *Willimantic Chronicle*. We feel with Florence Grant who sent us the clipping that Paris will need some (and also some) special librarians. . . .

*We Beg to Announce.* . . . Two an-  
5 ★

nouncements have come to us which seem particularly nice and are for all that we know, precedents: The MacFadden Publications, Inc., sent out an attractive printed leaflet telling about their Division of Marketing and Research and offering the cooperation of its research and library resources. Mrs. Allen is the librarian. . . . The other is the mimeographed Special Bulletin of the Financial Advertisers Association reprinting in full the announcement of the opening of the Peoples-Pittsburgh Trust Company Library with Ella J. Chalfant as librarian. . . . And in *Printers' Ink* for January 2, 1936, we find that the Byron G. Moon Company, New York, has established a textile library and trade-mark bureau in the interests of Sanfordized-shrunk fabrics and trade-marked lines. . . .

*No Not One.* . . . Secretary Clarke ran a little advertisement of her own in

the September SPECIAL LIBRARIES, "Wanted" — she said, "Back numbers of SPECIAL LIBRARIES, Vol. I, nos. 2, 7 and 9." To date (we quote) "not even one response has been received." Someone had better come across quick or she'll suspend the warrant and search laws and go get 'em. . . .

*S. L. A. in Print.* . . . "Then there was and is Mary L. Alexander, the librarian — the only person I ever met who made copywriting accurate and even easy." Harford Powel, in *Advertising & Selling*, December 19, 1935. . . . Ethel Wigmore, librarian of the Bellevue School of Nursing, begins a regular department, "Book Parade" in the January issue of the *American Journal of Nursing*. . . . "A Vertical File for Business Information," Eleanor Cavanaugh's paper read before the regional conference of the New York Library Association at Lake George, September 13, is reprinted in the January *Wilson Bulletin*. . . . And the December 14 *Editor & Publisher* carries a story on a subject which is the black beast of all Specials who have files. It's not only newspaper librarians who have to solve "the serious question of how not to grow." Read John G. Baker's "Reference Revision Sadly Needed" for some good suggestions on weeding. Mr. Baker is assistant News Editor of the *Milwaukee Journal*. . . .

*Snippets.* . . . Both President Stebbins and the chapters seem to have had a

grand and profitable time on his recent junket. . . . Beatrice Hager of the New York Municipal Reference Library has just finished indexing the latest volume of SPECIAL LIBRARIES. It's the second time she's done it and we think she deserves some kind of a decoration. . . . Jean Taylor who used to be head of the Science-Technology Division in the Queens Public Library is now Chief Reference Librarian of the system. . . . We like the way Cincinnati girded up its loins and waded in to clear up a printer's debt incurred for the Chapter. They've sold applets, theatre tickets and haven't yet reached the end of their ingenuity. . . .

*Our Patron Saint.* . . . When we read in a recent New Yorker that Saint Catherine of Alexandria was the patron saint of librarians we were minded to write a screed on the blessed lady. We're still minded but we can't find any authority that says she is. In fact the Britannica assigns her to wheelwrights and mechanics. However, since "she was exceeding fair and of a wondrous intellect" and since "her form and face were equally beautiful, and her intelligence was so far above the average that the learned men were puzzled and astounded by her wisdom and understanding" we think we'd better claim her. Won't some helpful sister who knows her book of martyrs and calendar of saints substantiate our claim? . . .

## Publications of Special Interest

Addams, Jane. *My friend, Julia Lathrop*. Macmillan, N. Y. 1935. 228 p. \$2.00.

A clear, straightforward record of another of the brilliant Illinois women who did much to advance social welfare. The Washington phase is omitted and attention focused on work for state institutions, civil service reform, and work with social agencies. Should be read with Linn's life of Jane Addams.

Bernard, H. J. and others. *Handbook of the heavens*. McGraw, N. Y. 1935. 131 p. \$1.00.

Written for amateurs by the members of the Junior

Astronomy Club of the Museum of Natural History. Clear discussions of astronomical phenomena and fine charts showing the skies at different seasons. Detailed small charts. Glossary and Greek alphabet included. An excellent small handbook.

Bicknell, E. P. *Pioneering with the Red Cross*. Macmillan, N. Y. 1935. 281 p. \$2.00.

A colorful picture of the development of a great social agency. It combines notes on changes in organization administration due to expansion, with graphic and moving pictures of disasters and service for desolate humanity. An effective treatment of a phase of social service.



**Bray, F. C. *World of myths*. Crowell, N. Y. 1935. 323 p. \$2.00.**

A useful handbook of the different mythologies defining the characters alphabetically in national classifications. The descriptions are condensed, but clear. Includes a straight alphabetical index.

**Council of State Governments. *Book of the States. Above, and American Legislators' Assoc.*, Chicago. 1935. 505 p. \$2.00.**

Useful material on the lawmakers of the 48 states and illuminating discussion of the joint reference services developing for their use. Includes an extensive section on the legislative reference services of the different states with full data on their organization, scope and personnel, salaries and other expenses.

**Curtis, M. M. *Story of snuff and snuff boxes*. Liveright, N. Y. 1935. 206 p. \$3.50.**

Concise, readable history of the use of snuff with many literary references. The artistic development of snuff bottles and containers illustrated by 118 fine half tones, with annotations. Long bibliography included. No index.

**Darlington, G. M. *Office management*. Ronald, N. Y. 1935. 203 p. \$2.00.**

A mediocre book on the subject. Clear and simple for the beginner, but hardly up-to-date. The reading list of 16 titles includes but four titles published since 1930.

**Denison, J. H. *Mark Hopkins*. Scribner, N. Y. 1935. 327 p. \$3.00.**

A rather simple and appealing biography of the famous president of Williams College. Particular stress is laid on the strong influence of the strenuous theology of that earlier day. A quite charming picture of family life in Mark Hopkins' youth. No bibliography. Well indexed.

**Diehl, H. S. *Healthful living*. McGraw, N. Y. 1935. 354 p. \$2.50.**

A clear, intelligent and practical book on various phases of health, discussing the benefits of many fads while discounting exaggerated claims; filled with specific suggestions of value. Includes long list of additional readings. Good index.

**Eastman, E. G. *Pratt, the red man's Moses*. Univ. of Oklahoma Press, Norman. 1935. 285 p. \$3.00.**

A unique phase of America's development appears in this record of the energetic boy who, from service in the Civil War, went into the frontier service of the Army and on to work for the Indian and the development of Carlisle. An interesting account of the conflicting theories and interests involved. Brief bibliography.

**Floherly, J. J. *Movie-makers*. Doubleday-Doran, N. Y. 1935. 100 p. \$2.00.**

Effective and clear, if elementary, presentation of the many phases involved in motion pictures. Fine photographic illustrations. Brief notes on the special library developments. Not indexed.

**Gilchrist, D. B., ed. *Doctoral dissertations accepted by American universities, 1934-1935*. Wilson, N. Y. 1935. 102 p. \$1.00.**

The second of these annual lists compiled for the Na-

tional Research Council. The 2649 dissertations are listed under broad subject headings. Includes author index. A record of the intensive work done in many specialized fields, especially in the physical, biological and social sciences.

**Gourley, J. E. and Lester, R. M. *Diffusion of knowledge*. Carnegie Corp., N. Y. 1935. 314 p. Limited free distribution.**

A list of some 1300 books, with bibliographical details but without annotations, made possible wholly or in part by grants from the Corporation between 1911 and 1935. The variety of topics is amazing and the groupings under agencies receiving grants is particularly illuminating.

**Haas, Irvin. *Bibliography of modern American presses*. Black Cat Press, Chicago. 1935. 98 p. \$3.50.**

A list of private presses and their books, to a great extent supplementing the work of Will Ransom. Name, proprietor's address and brief description heads each numbered list. A charming illustration of typographic skill and a key to much interesting work.

**Haslett, A. W. *Unsolved problems of science*. Macmillan, N. Y. 1935. 317 p. \$2.00.**

The fundamental problems of creation, other worlds, the origin of man, the riddle of sex, and the attempts at their solution, discussed by a scholar who combines simplicity and charm of style with knowledge of the many efforts made by scientists to further knowledge.

**Heffner, H. C. and others. *Modern theatre practice*. Crofts, N. Y. 1935. 378 p. \$4.00.**

A specific handbook giving complete and detailed information for the director, and those who design the setting and the lighting. Thorough, workmanlike and interesting. Many working drawings for scenery and setting details. Long, classified bibliography with excellent annotations.

**Hungerford, Edward. *Pathway of empire*. McBride, N. Y. 1935. 325 p. \$3.50.**

An intensive fascinating story of New York State with its mixture of history, legend and contemporary notes. The author knows his state intimately. Its story loses no luster in his hands. Excellent photographs. Because of the wealth of detail, the lack of an index is regrettable.

**Huxley, Julian and da Andrade, E. N. *Simple science*. Harper, N. Y. 1935. 688 p. \$3.50.**

A simple and natural approach to the whole field of science for the person with no scientific background whatsoever. Clearly written and well illustrated. The authors have leaned over backward in their attempt at simplification, so some of their statements are somewhat misleading. Useful for first readers of science and for answering elementary questions, particularly those calling for pictures of simple apparatus. Rather inadequate index.

**Illick, J. S. *Outline of general forestry*. Barnes & Noble, N. Y. 1935. 259 p. \$1.50.**

A well arranged outline full of specific information on the growing opportunities in forestry, including data on training, salaries, range of position, etc. Many reading references at end of chapter. Illustrated charts and pictographs. A lucid and comprehensive treatment.

Johnson, I. F. *William Rockhill Nelson and the Kansas City Star*. Burton Pub. Co., Kansas City. 1935. 208 p. \$2.00.

The story of the building of a great newspaper and of the vision of a far-sighted, courageous and stubborn man who saw what Kansas City might become and fought to make that vision come true.

Lincoln, J. C. *Cape Cod yesterdays*. Little, Brown, Boston. 1935. 286 p. \$4.00.

A delightful series of essays portraying the life on Cape Cod in the late Victorian days. Cranberry crops, fish weirs, clams and quahaugs, the old mills, all are graphically and sympathetically described. Beautifully illustrated by Harold Brett.

Parker, A. C. *Manual for history museums*. Columbia Univ. Press, N. Y. 1935. 204 p. \$3.00.

All the problems of museum management, support, organization, selection, relations with schools, research and library methods discussed primarily from the history museum angle, but applicable to other types. Good brief bibliography included. Clear and interesting in style. Well illustrated.

Peel, R. V. *Political clubs of New York City*. Putnam, N. Y. 1935. 360 p. \$3.00.

Matter-of-fact description and analysis of social, civic

and welfare activities, chiefly of Republican and Democratic clubs. Some slight attention given to Socialist and Communist organizations. Many footnotes, references to detailed discussion. Extensive bibliography.

Sandoz, Mari. *Old Jules*. Little, Brown, Boston. 1935. 424 p. \$3.00.

A turbulent, valiant, erratic, brilliant Swiss conquers the sand hills of Nebraska and helps to establish settlers there against the forces of cattlemen, wind, drought and snow. His work as frontier doctor, his experiments with fruit and grain, his violent personal life all are told. A vital record in any picture of the country's growth.

Todd, J. M. *College conundrum*. Round Table Press, N. Y. 1935. 257 p. \$1.50.

The members of the faculty of Beloit College give their respective replies to the question, "How can the instructor and the student find the most fruitful contact?" The wide difference in opinions and their freedom of expression form an interesting basis for further consideration.

Vorse, M. H. *Footnote to folly*. Farrar & Rinehart, N. Y. 1935. 407 p. \$3.00.

The vivid, caustic and heartbreaking record of the struggle for freedom and justice of workers here and abroad, seen through the eyes of a brilliant and understanding woman from a different environment. One more vital document in the collection on social progress.

## Periodicals Directory 1935

FOR all types of libraries, the "Periodicals Directory," edited by Carolyn F. Ulrich and published by R. R. Bowker Company of New York, is a handy tool. But the special library should naturally turn to it as a guide perhaps more often than others. Many a special library finds itself particularly dependent on periodicals, and a well-selected list, world wide in scope, classified by subjects is indeed a much desired reference book to have available on your desk.

This second edition (1935) of Miss Ulrich's list of current foreign and domestic periodicals is a revision of the 1932 edition; it has also been markedly enlarged by 2,500 additional titles.

But even the inclusion of 8,200 titles of magazines which have been found most useful does not make the list exhaustive. The entries include full title, date of origin, frequency, size, price, publisher, place and indication of supplements. No evaluation is attempted but indexing services are indicated, and

general characteristics of the periodicals are shown by abbreviations.

The second edition likewise has the added feature of bibliographies which are entered under each subject following the list of the current periodicals. We cite as an example, the general subject heading "Business, Commerce and Industry." Here we find 268 titles of magazines, with many indicated under the sub-head of Exports and Imports, some under Corporations, and some under Statistics. The Bibliography following the list includes thirteen items, several of which are Special Libraries Association publications as the "Guides to business facts and figures." The purpose of the bibliography is to group together for the user additional sources to which he may turn easily.

A Key to Subjects at the beginning of the volume is very complete and carefully cross-indexed so that the business man or the industrialist, not accustomed to bibliographic tools, can not go astray.

The volume likewise contains at the back a complete Title Index, arranged alphabetically.

REBECCA B. RANKIN, *Librarian*  
New York Municipal Reference Library

#### Duplicate Exchange List

THE following titles are offered free except for transportation charges. Please apply to Miss Rosamond Cruikshank, Chairman, Duplicate Exchange Committee, Hartford Public Library, Hartford, Conn.

*Am. inst. of min. & met. eng.* — v. 67, 1922  
*Am. soc. of mech. eng. Trans.*, v. 39-48; also 1923-26  
*Best's Illustrations*, 1930, '31, '32, '33  
*Best's Life reports*, 1930  
*Blue book of southern progress*, 1929, 1934  
*Conf. of charities and corrections*, 1899, 1900, 1906  
*Decorative furnisher directory*, 1933-34  
*Directory of directors* — Boston, 1920  
*Directory of directors* — New York, 1921-22  
*Fraternal ins. compend.*, 1928  
*Habana, directory*, 1899  
*Kelly's directory of Great Britain*, 1915  
*League of Nations stat. yearbook*, 1931-32  
*Lloyd's calendar* 1930  
*Merchant marine vessels*, 1912, '15, '17, '19, '20-21, '23  
*Moody's Banks* 1931  
*Moody's Government* 1926, 1931, 1933  
*Moody's Industrials* 1927, 1931  
*Moody's Public utilities*, 1927-28, 1931  
*Moody's Railroads* 1927, 1931, 1932  
*N. Y. Stock Exchange yearbook*, 1932-33  
*Official guide of the railways*, 1935  
*Patterson's Am. educ. dir.*, 1929, 1931  
*Petroleum register* 1933  
*Poor's Industrials* 1922, 1923  
*Poor's Public utilities* 1920, 1922, 1925-31, 1933  
*Poor & Moody Industrials*, 1924  
*Postal guide*, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932  
*Purchaser's guide to the music trades*, 1931, 1932  
*Radio adv. rates & data*, 1932, 1933  
*Rate research*, 1912-1930  
*Review buyer's directory*, 1932  
*Security dealers of No. Amer.* — 1929-1934  
*Signs of the Times directory*, 1933, 1934  
*Standard Advertising Register agency list*, 1932, 1935  
*Thomas, A. H. Laboratory apparatus & reagents*, 1931  
*Thomas wholesale grocery register* 1933  
*Thompson. Population and distribution*, ed. 4  
*Ulrich. Periodicals directory* 1932  
*Who's who in egg & poultry industries*, 1933  
*World almanac*, 1931

#### Wanted!

CAN anyone supply these items, free except for transportation charges, to the libraries that have asked for them? If so, please notify Miss Rosamond Cruikshank, Chairman, Duplicate Exchange Committee, Hartford Public Library, Hartford, Conn.

*Acad. of pol. sci.* — Proc. v. 1, No. 3; v. 2, No. 3; v. 6, No. 2  
*Amer. bankers assoc.* — Journal, Mar. 1920, v. 12  
*Amer. bankers assoc.* — Proc. prior to 1877

*American city*, v. 46, Jan.-June 1932  
*Bankers mag.*, v. 72-102, Jan. 1906-June 1921  
*Civil engineering*, v. 1, 1931  
*Com. & Fin. Chron.* — Pub. util. compend. prior to 1935  
*Experiment station record*, v. 2, 3, 4, 13; v. 14, No. 1, 10  
*Fed Reserve bulletin* May 1924  
*International cotton buyer*  
*Leferre. Reminiscences of a stock broker*, 1923  
*Mech. & Met. Jl.* v. 1, no. 2, 1917; v. 4, no. 3, 1920  
*N. Y. Ch. of Com.* annual report v. 9, 1866-7  
*Official guide for shippers & travellers*  
*Pat. Off. gazette*, Sept. 25, Dec. 11, 1883; Dec. 4, 1894; Apr. 1, 1913  
*U. S. Dept. of Agric. Bul.* 696, Sept. 1917  
*U. S. Census* — Outlying territories & possessions  
*Watkins. Prod. & price of cotton for 100 yrs.* 1895

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